COMMEMORATOR

Published Monthly by The Commemoration Committee for The Black Panther Party

VOLUME 3 NO. 7 May 1993

Justice Was Not Served!

CALIFORNIA LOOTING LOCAL TREASURIES TO COVER ITS BUDGET WOES

The governor of California has put forth a desperate plan to fund the state budget by looting the treasuries of county and city governments.

Governor Wilson's proposed budget, in the name of the state's "severe fiscal condition," lays out a plan to fund the state government by stripping $2.2 billion from local governments.

This will mean disaster for the counties already financially strapped, and for those within the communities who rely on county funded social services. Black and other poor working families will be the hardest hit.

In Oakland, California, birthplace of the Black Panther Party, city government and state news media sources are projecting massive layoffs of Oakland city workers due to an expected $43 million deficit in the city budget, one-third of the city's workforce may ultimately be laid off. Utility tax hikes, higher assessments for emergency medical services, and increased amounts in traffic tickets and parking meters will cause further financial disaster for those already fighting to survive. These are all taxes

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The King Verdict

Courtesy of Ted Hays

Sidestepping the real economic and racialist discrepancies which divide the world, federal, state and local authorities gathered one of the biggest concentrations of domestic military occupation in the history of the U.S. in Los Angeles in preparation for the second Rodney King verdict. With the 52 lives claimed and a cost of $1 billion in direct damage after last year's verdict, the one thing that everyone knew, but few spoke of as the real story behind the second Rodney King trial, the decision, the timing, and arrangements for the jury announcement, was the fact that the government backed down.

The common understanding, however, is clearly that the stakes were high and if not for the "riots" last year, the state trial held in Simi Valley, which acquitted all four officers, would have stood as final. Never before has there been such widespread corroboration of H. Rap Brown's comment in the late 1960's that "violence is as American as cherry pie."

Protests of angry south central Los Angeles residents and those of at least 13 other major cities led to military occupation in some urban ghettos. Those urban ghettos housed the same milieu that sparked the Black Panther Party for self-defense 28 years ago.

While the BPP called for organizational discipline with a Ten-Point Program as a response to the daily police brutality and the murder of members from the black and low-income community, the community response to the King verdict has not yet produced the type of commitment to organizational effort that are needed to focus on the systemic violence that occurs within the justice system itself.

The first King verdict brought more massive military aggression than ever before because the verdict revealed the nature of the oppression in the black and low-income community. An obvious difference in the aftermath of the first King verdict was there were as many, if not more, Hispanic and other ethnic groupings participating in the rebellions as protests grew in leaps and bounds across the country.

Another phenomenon occurred on the April 29, 1992 that did not occur in the mid-sixties; barricades were built weeks before, in preparation for the verdict, with wild rumors floated in the corporate media about how

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AMERICA'S POW and POLITICAL PRISONER GULAG

TIP OF THE ICEBERG EXPOSED

The question of immediate unconditional release of "Prisoners of war" (POW's) and "Political Prisoners" (PP's) held in America's dungeons, is of historic importance of the "Intercommunal" struggle for "Liberty and Justice for All." It also begs the question of whether a liberation struggle can mantain legitimacy without adequately addressing the continuing torment of its own "Partisan Heroes" whose blood cries out from America's "Gulags" where they have been marked for physical, mental and spiritual death. Or in the Biblical, words of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper???"

If history is of any guidance value, it teaches that every legitimate liberation struggle has heretofore demanded immediate unconditional release of its POW/PP Partisans. Can

The thunder of the MOVE aerial bombing massacre in Philadelphia and the lightning of police semiautomatic fire coupled with more and more sparks from electric chairs which exclusively seat poor people signify the increased reign of American fascism in the form of state sponsored government terror.

those who claim to love liberty in the U.S. do less than this??? This is not a question of principle alone; it is also one of practical necessity and strategic priority. Those partisans imprisoned during the course of our ongoing struggle for freedom are "Pillars of the People." Their spirits live within their respective constituencies, a material force of history itself. The systemic ability to free them is at once strategic. It requires depriving our common class enemy of the use of the "Criminal 'Just Us' System" as an instrument of state torture, to murder, maim and silence those who have the revolutionary audacity to advance the legitimate needs of the people.

The reality of the POW's and PP's America keeps hidden in its dungeon "Gulags," lays bare the state's "Hidden Blood Stained Hands" as oppressor of the wretched of this earth and arch-antagonist of those who dare carry our banner. It exposes the treacherous hypocrisy of the so-called democratic, progressive, liberal and middle forces, who pretend democracy exists for other than those rich enough to buy it, in the rare instances where they do not already own the decision making apparatus. The thunder of the MOVE aerial bombing massacre in Philadelphia and the lightning of police semi-automatic fire coupled with more and more sparks from electric chairs which exclusively seat poor people signify the increased reign of American fascism in the form of government sponsored terror.

It is indeed fatal error to separate the POW/PP issue from the unbroken historic chain of state terror which gives the acts many heroic partisans are falsely accused of and their political context and content. This history includes the bang from the fifteen sticks of dynamite which exploded in the Sixteenth Avenue Baptist Church, at 10:19 a.m., on September 15, 1963, tearing apart the bodies of four African American little girls: Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, Addie Mae Collins and Cynthia Wesley, who had knelt to pray after Sunday school during their not so easy walk toward a freedom which still eludes us today.

This history includes the government sanctioned murders of freedom fighters such as Medgar Wiley Evers (1963); Andrew Goodman, James Earl Chaney and Michael Henry Schwerner (1964); El Hajj Malik El Shabazz, Malcolm X (1965). To allow the question of our POW/PP partisans to be dealt with in isolation of the reign of government sponsored terror, which gives the acts many heroic partisans are falsely accused of their political context and content, is, for example, to ignore the fact that the symbolic emblem of the Black Panther emerged out of the same Lowndes County, Alabama wherein four Klu Klux Klansmen viciously murdered white freedom fighter Viola Liuzzo (1965).

We can never allow the state to separate the question of immediate unconditional release of all POW's and PP's from the state sponsored terrorist murders of all those who died the most honorable of all deaths along the road to liberation, remember: Martin Luther King Jr. (1968); Fred Hampton and Mark Clark (1969); prisoners W.L. Nolen, Cleveland Edwards, Alvin Miller, Fred Billinglea, James McClain, William Christmas, and freedom fighter Jonathan Jackson (1970); Soledad George Jackson, and 29 Attica prisoners (1971) and countless others cut down along the path toward

We can never allow the state to separate the question of immediate unconditional release of all POW's and PP's from the state sponsored government terrorist murders...

"Liberty and Justice for All." Nor can the POW/PP question be separated from the "Raging Riots of the 'Sizzling Sixties' 'Long Hot Summers'." These "Civil War Skirmishes" consisted of more than 300 riots, consuming over 200 major American cities between 1965 and 1968. Of the 237,793 troops called up, 171,032 were committed against American citizens. Over 164 people died, prisoners taken exceeded 20,000, more than 5,000 casualties were reported with property damage shattering the 200 million dollar mark. No legitimate liberation struggle can ever let the question of its POW's and PP's be depoliticized by allowing the state to separate the question from the historic context in which it arose.

The acquittal of the "Soledad Prison Brothers" (whom the government wasn't able to murder) and also of Angela Davis and the striking down of the death penalty by the Supreme Court in 1972 with its decision in Furman v. Georgia; were all part and parcel of false prison and other so-called reforms designed to diffuse, subvert, pervert, coopt and rob the "Revolutionary movement" of its "Revolutionary character and content." Almost simultaneously the streets were flooded with "Poverty Pimp government funded program 'blood-seed-money,'" cheap high grade heroin, LSD and other mind bending agents. This scenario was designed to dupe the more naive elements of the struggle into believing that the ruling class was undergoing a change of heart, in the wake of My Lai, Kent State, Jackson State, Attica

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COMMEMORATOR

Published by the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party

"SERVING ALL OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES"
Volume 3 Number 7 May, 1993 Oakland, California

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I was given a copy of your paper when I went into Riverhead to the motor vehicle office there. I'm a white male in his mid-thirties who has been living an alternative lifestyle since my youth. I was involved in Islam at one time and found your article on the Great Satan interesting and would like to see more writings in this vein. I'd like to see the traditional interpretation of the Great Satan tied to the Western European financial system of banks and corporations that initiate policies that take away from the future of human and natural environments.

The fate of the common person and their society and the natural environment are inextricably linked and are both endangered by the current rape-and-leave policies of the Great Satan. I'd like to see this link between social justice and environmental sanity strengthened and made clear, in the hopes that this would cause both camps to join forces against a common, real, and dangerous enemy whose true goal is the utter destruction of this Earth for their short-term gain.

Secondly as an organization rooted in the black community, I'd like you to look at racism among blacks. As a white person who comes into contact with people of all races and creeds, I find that there is as much bigotry of blacks towards whites as the traditional view of bigotry of whites against blacks. I believe that most blacks believe that they were living in paradise in tribal Africa and that the evil whites marched into their peaceful villages and took them as slaves, and that this view gives them a moral superiority in their suffering under the common oppressor, in that they believe their race to be innocent of oppression to themselves or others.

The reality is that only the rich of all nations are free of oppression, that all of us who are of the middle and lower classes suffer under the yoke of the Great Satan. The truth is that the blacks enslaved themselves. It was common practice for warring tribes to capture members of the enemy tribe and sell them into slavery. First they sold them to the expanding Islamic Empire, who considered the enslavement and conversion of infidels their God-given right. Then later on Muslim traders sold black slaves to the Europeans who sailed to the African shores in search of trade goods.

I think that slavery of any form, including the financial slavery that most of us live under, is contrary to our God-given right to freedom. I also don't like being the victim of bigoted attitudes from anyone as this degrades me of my humanity. Yet I feel that it's time to set the record straight, and my hope is that can bring peace between the blacks and the whites as well as between all of humanity.

Mark Girard
Mastic Beach, New York

Dear Editor,

I recently heard a speech given this week in one of my classes at Southern Oregon State College where the young man who spoke displayed copies of your newspaper.

After reading your April issue, I wanted to let you know that I appreciate reading the truth about certain issues that I didn't get anywhere else.

I'm particularly interested in your coverage of COINTELPRO — a former article about the role they played in the breaking up of the Panthers, and this month's article about Leonard Peltier. I'd like to see more about exactly how our government goes about or has gone about destroying community movements.

Margaret Keene
White City, Oregon

Dear Editor,

I read your paper and liked it!

We need to see more writings of the truth out here on Long Island. The media is one sided out here and facts are not presented in the people's interest. We have to make the truth known and there are two sides to this.

Dean Arthur
Long Island, New York

Dear Editor,

I read your coverage of the L.A. trials and police brutality with interest. Here in Philadelphia and throughout this region, brutality and murder at the hands of the police continue daily. While there seems to be endless examples of these cases that fail to reach just resolutions at the hands of the courts, I was recently struck by a case in Trenton, NJ, that paralleled the King case.

Trenton police officer Earl Hill was videotaped beating a man, Thomas Downing, who was present while Hill's partner arrested his girlfriend's son. In his defense, Officer Hill, who is more than twice Mr. Downing's size, said he felt threatened by Mr. Downing. Many community people, who repeatedly saw the video tape on TV, were surprised by the acquittal. On the one hand, this case didn't have the same racial elements present in the King case. (The victim, the officer/defendant, the police chief, the mayor, et al. were black and jury was racially mixed.) On the other hand, the lack of aggressive prosecution was striking. After the verdict, the prosecutor went over and shook Officer Hill's hand. The prosecutor stated to the press that he was "not personally disappointed by the verdict."

As Bobby Seale's piece "Why We Are Not Racist" pointed out, "Our fight is a class struggle and not a race struggle." I hope that your continued good coverage of the L.A. trials explores these complex issues.

Mary Hampton
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor,

I read your newspaper regularly, please keep up the good work. It is good to know the ideas of the Panthers are not dead and people have the courage of their convictions to provide the opportunity for teaching purposes across the nation.

It is good to hear from those who know the Panthers that did not sell out, who took down what they said and published it for people across the country. Just the idea that we'll pull people together for the reason of continuing the publication is the most valid thing that has happened since they shot down Huey P. Newton. They did that after they weakened his ideas, weakened his influence until he was not "somebody." The fact that they weren't able to for years when they remembered what happened when they killed Dr. King, I don't think "they" has to be explained here. It may change from community to community. It means a large spectrum of killers and people who allow it to happen and who generate people who do.

With a paper like the Commemorator, it provides a voice so that thinking people can begin to make thinking choices.

Sandra Ellworth
Queens, New York

WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS

We appreciate hearing from our readers about the paper.

We also want to know about what *you* are doing, the news from *your* community.

The Commemoration Committee also has speakers available for presentations to your church, club, class or other group.

Write or call:

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am a resident of North Bellport, a low-income community on Long Island, New York. Living here for over 23 years I've seen my community die slowly because of failing economic solutions to save the local economy.

As a reader of your paper, I feel you should focus more on local economic problems. As a black American living in a low-income area, I know our communities will improve when they are more economically stable.

Our communities are on the borderline of destruction, facing enormous problems due to bad budget and legislative decisions to correct our failing economy. Raising taxes, and cutting life-support programs such as medical care may save the government money but it is costing a lot of lives. Not only do the low-income communities suffer, but also middle businesses and professionals feel the impact of these decisions also. The working class must have a decent wage in order to buy, therefore, supporting their doctors and businesses by spending with them. In return, that business they bought from can afford to pay their workers a decent wage. The problem is our government isn't focusing this way, but is looking for solutions to keep money in the hands of a few (big corporations) by developing false programs such as Enterprise Zones, which would give a person a job but at what wage?

Lack of understanding of these political decisions by citizens in our communities is helping to allow false "economic solutions" to continue. The *Commemorator*, has the ability to educate the public, and inform people on real positive solutions to their economic troubles.

I have seen government programs designed to benefit my community be eliminated or in some cases actually stole funds out of the community. H.U.D., a housing program, started a program to sell houses at $500 per house to low-income families. These houses were somehow bought by two local landlords who bought these houses and mortgaged them at $30,000. Their punishment was basically a slap on the wrist and they are still running their real estate agencies today.

Redevelopment is also being sold to us as a solution to bring back the local economy. An outlet shopping center was recently established here. It was supposed to provide jobs and help build the economy of my community. Hardly anyone was employed out of the community, yet the center is doing extremely well, making profits off of the residents and transferring these profits out of the community.

The solution to our crime situation is a police sub-station known as B.A.D., Bellport Against Drugs. I am not for drugs, but I am also against police states. Instead of looking at the cause of why these people are turning to crime (no job and no money) they are basically labeling the whole town as criminals. B.A.D. has tried to enforce policies such as Restrictive Zones, which is a policy involving a plea-bargain offer to people involved in criminal acts. The accused has the option of going to jail or not to be in the area where the crime occurred. North Bellport, is only about 3 miles long and 3 miles wide. This policy actually runs people out town without the tar and feathers. This type of "solution" also leads to the harrassment of the innocent, giving police incentive to stop and harass anyone who "looks suspicious" to them. B.A.D. has sent letters to the homes of people that were stopped in Bellport, stating the vehicle they were driving was stopped in a high-drug, high-prostitution areas. An area where you live, can you imagine having to explain this to your wife and family, when all you wanted was to go to the store and buy a loaf of bread.

The point of my letter is the *Commemorator* can add these local issues to the real cause of situations like the L.A. riots (no community solidarity, high unemployment, and government systemic failure). You have the ability to educate and inform our communities that this is going on from coast to coast. Building local economy is the first step to building a better national economy.

W. Jones
Bellport, New York

Dear Editor,

I read some of the article on the MOVE bombing and have to say that the dates, people who were involved, and the cause of the people and children dying with only one survivor, to me makes little sense. I read only a portion of it because it brought back vivid memories of what I saw on TV — the horror of it all — and I feel anger. It is a situation that should have never happened.

I also read the article on the immigrant workers and really don't have too much to say about this except seeing one line written on Native Americans.

Being Native American myself, and my biological parents being immigrant workers; I think there should be something written more on the Native American than was, as you did when writing about the railroad workers, sweatshops, etc.

Nevertheless I got an idea of what you write in the *Commemorator* because I never read it before and a lot of what I glanced at and read are topics of news to get the actual truth.

I read in your September articles on the African indigenous political heritage and the Lakota woman. This article was shown to me and it brought back a lot of memories of my own experiences which I lived and the assimilation that I went through and unassimilating myself and finding my own heritage and receiving my Indian name, which is Sweet Smile Bright Star.

Please keep writing articles on the Native American because it is very important to hear more.

Because of these articles it brought up a lot and I will submit a more extensive article at a later date.

Sweet Smile Bright Star
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on your rapidly accelerating, increasing distribution. I've just read your March, 1993 issue and it really is an inspiration to read the article on page three, "Commemorator's Expansion and Growth."

It seems that as the conditions of openly practiced fascism reach heights that surpass Hitler's Germany, where concentration or "work" camps have been replaced in their objective purpose by government programs such as Enterprise Zones, workfare, and the extensive private industry use of prison labor, the conventional bourgeois-owned press reflects ever yet narrower and narrower views. In fact, there's really little "NEWS" we get anymore. And what we do get is so blatantly representing the government's and big business's interests, that there's absolutely *no way* to find out what's really going on.

Your last few issues have been exceptionally good, providing a clear view from the "other side," that is *OUR* side of the story, like the truth about UEZ's, the L.A. riots, and other things which the general public has *no idea* about.

It's great to hear your circulation has really taken off. People *must* know, and frankly, what the "left" has to offer has become so pathetic, they don't really have a clue as to what's going on because they're not close enough to the community. *Commemorator* puts a high quality and politically sophisticated publication on the map of "alternative" papers.

Wishing you the best — I for one will promote the paper to all those I know. Everyone these days is searching for answers to how we fight our way out of the mess we're in because of the greed of a handful of people, and I think you've begun to hit the nail on the head.

B. Smith
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor,

I am writing to commend you and your staff at the *Commemorator* for the high caliber and far reaching scope of your newspaper. The most recent issue I've seen is March 1993, although I have had access to other issues over the past year or so.

As a S.F. Bay Area native, and a child in the '60s, my recollections of the activities of the BPP were funneled through media hype — not until recently have a variety of opportunities come together for me to become educated about the BPP and its fight for the rights of all oppressed people. The *Commemorator* has played a large role in that education. Only by organizing together, in our own self interest, can we achieve victory.

Barbara Santi
Portland, Oregon

Dear Editor,

I'm writing this letter in support of your newspaper. In a period of time when things like Hillary's hats and the last Elvis sighting are considered newsworthy by the mainstream press, I truly appreciate the existence of your paper and the efforts of your writers in addressing real issues. You don't make compromises at the expense of publishing important information. These articles must continue to be put out to the public.

Leslie Bunnage
Palo Alto, California

Dear Editor,

The things that you wrote in this article in the *Commemorator* paper, "What Causes a Famine," starting with the act of God, is so true. Many people in this world today do not understand why people can be hungry, even myself. We get lots of rain for irrigation on the land to produce crops, and sunlight to make them grow. In some states agriculture cannot be produced because of land. That causes a lot of disease and malnutrition and kills children and adults.

But here in America is worse than in some places over in Somalia. The organization that I help with sends donations of food to places like this. Maybe we can get food to people here in America, first, before we use all of our resources in foreign countries. That would be better without the use of United States help at all. Hope everyone who reads this article will have almost the same ideas and feelings like me.

Gloria Harris
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Editor,

A friend gave me a copy of your 3/93 edition, and I have found it helpful to read it along side major news outlet coverage of events — sure helps jog my thinking, especially to give it broader perspective. TV news is designed to help us forget what happened last year, to forget to put things together into patterns, to forget there are different classes of people in our economy with different interests. I hope your circulation grows.

Hal Day
Portland, Oregon

Embattled Communities' Own Organizations Take Initiative for Summer Jobs

Worldwide News Service

Numerous grass-roots organizations of concerned community residents across the nation are holding meetings to address the absolute lack of summer jobs, according to reports received by Worldwide News Service. Summer jobs are a necessity for poor youths to reach for dignity and a sense of material stability, say heads of organizations with low-income constituencies, and indications are gathering from all quarters that no summer jobs programs will be funded by federal, state or local governments.

Third-world conditions are prevalent in urban and rural communities, according to these organizers, especially among the young and among minorities. The black American male, for instance, is now publicized to be a statistically endangered species. Jobs are the universal concern of all those who wish to avoid the prospect of police violence and jail, on the one hand, and spontaneous rioting, on the other.

Fear Brought Forth New Trial, Verdicts

Most of those critically commenting on the recent Rodney King verdicts have named job programs as the most crucial element in the prevention of the kinds of violence that exploded after the Simi Valley verdict, according to experts working with National Coalition of Concerned Legal Professionals. CCLP participants in several cities stated it was the fear of a renewal of the protests and their harsh suppression that drove the federal indictments, the trial, and the jury's split verdicts.

In Suffolk County, N.Y., redevelopment schemes to enrich local power brokers and profiteers have brought attacks on organizations of farm workers and other poor residents, driving much of the population out of downtown areas. The subsequent projects provide no replacement housing or jobs in the course of the subsequent construction work, says Operations Manager Phyllis Sonabend of Eastern Farm Workers Association. Now, stores are vacant for lack of customers, residents homeless, and unemployed youths on the streets pursued and harassed by police in New York's number one agricultural county.

Ultra-Right Moves In Where Workers' Organizations Ousted

Businesses without nearby workers' organizations to look towards for protection have turned instead to ultra-right wing, ultra-reactionary imported elements like the Ku Klux Klan, with apparent encouragement from police elements — a virtual declaration of war against local unemployed minority women and men. President Clinton and others have offered a series of initiatives, including enterprise zones and other mechanisms whereby jobs are created in one community or neighborhood, using cheap labor found locally, often under workfare duress, to replace much higher paid workers in other areas. Such measures have been defeated twice by right-wing opposition, while those on the left continue to support these plans.

Enterprise zones, particularly, have a clear record of community destruction everywhere they have been tried. The record is especially vivid in New Jersey, where zones have a ten-year history of worsening conditions in declining cities. Support of these measures by the "cool-out squads" continues as local and state officials attempt to pacify the portion of the population from which violence is most feared. These groups advocate minimum-wage temporary work, or work in programs where employers are reimbursed for providing worker "training," but workers are issued only certificates of competence for low-skill jobs in maintenance, often not permitting employment through unions, already denuded of available job openings.

Privatization Cuts Jobs in Philadelphia

Philadelphia has been divided by Mayor Ed Rendell's aggressive campaign to fund the budgetary deficit of the city, which employs one in three local residents, through municipal layoffs, wage freezes, cuts in benefits, and massive privatization of city functions. Job creation is not even on the city's agenda.

"Privatized workers are doing the same work at half the pay they used to receive from the city," said Sadie Artiste, operations manager of Eastern Service Workers Association in Philadelphia. "We are holding meetings to get work of a productive nature at parity wages for the people of our community. Substitution of temps, trainees, teens and prisoners simply takes money out of our working communities and puts it in the hands of those of fabulous wealth who control our economy." Artiste stated that she would recommend the Philadelphia Workers Benefit Council direct and aid ESWA to create lists of job programs that are of local origin and outside government control. The lists will be added to the association's long-standing job information and referral benefit.

Organizations of Workers, Organizations of Employers

"Under our proven method of community organizing," she said, "we know it is also imperative to prioritize, along the same lines, the building of community organizations of employers." Those sentiments and intentions were echoed by Freda Smith, operations manager of ESWA in Trenton, N.J. and Sue Prensky of ESWA in the Roxbury-Dorchester section of Boston. Several farm worker organizing drives along the East Coast have stated they are watching the developments with interest. Mark Horn, spokesman for Finger Lakes Equal Justice Association in Rochester, N.Y. noted that the disappointment imposed on the nation's population that few summer jobs are available was carefully timed.

Only Organization Can Join Concerns over Various Issues

"It is calculated to disperse and diffuse dissatisfaction," he stated, "in the results of the second Rodney King trial; and to dispel and disorganize left over anger from the 1992 Simi Valley verdicts. It leaves an abstract but volatile mass of opinions awaiting a concrete structural answer. Only with such an answer in hand can the dissatisfied combine concern over irregularities in the verdicts with, for example, that over cancellation of non-LEAA (Law Enforcement Assistance Agency) funding of legal service programs, and the winding down of programs providing summer jobs for unemployed minorities, we nearly had a riot here last year in May," continued Horn. "Then, all the cool-outs came up with a call for a federal trial and for enterprise zones.

The second trial brought forth no recourse whatsoever for poor minorities exposed to ongoing oppression. It also came at a time of mass federal acquittals of police officers here in Rochester charged by the police chief himself with abuses and corruption." "Our community organizations are the only things that provide an understanding of how these elements relate to each other," he said. "They're all that stems the tide toward violent reaction. Organization is needed to seek new means to expand local production and sales, create additional jobs at parity pay, and allow our communities the freedom to seek recourse against the brutal practices of naked oppression to which they are routinely subjected."

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In Memory of
Brother Cesar Chavez

The death of Cesar Estrada Chavez, 66, of natural causes while resting at the home of a long-time United Farm Workers member April 23rd, marks the passing of a leader of working, oppressed and poor people — those upon whose backs the world's wealth is built.

His stand with the poor and the working class never wavered from the time he learned the principles of labor organizing, through his training by Fred Ross, an organizer-lieutenant for the Chicago-based Saul Alinsky's Community Service Organization. His founding of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in 1962, and his leadership of United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, later United Farm Workers of America AFL-CIO, made his life a ceaseless struggle on behalf of agricultural workers.

In 1966, NFWA merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AFL-CIO), forming the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, and organized unprecedented support for the cause of farm labor through the famous nationwide boycott of California table grapes. UFWOC made its final blow for victory through the Manhattan Street Machine's "controlled labor action."

Chavez understood the need for broad-based community support and requested the support of the Black Panther Party in 1973, according to BPP co-founder Bobby Seale during the second grape boycott, inspired by Chavez after growers who signed contracts with UFWOC in 1970 refused to renew them. A picket line was immediately established at the 27th and West Street Safeway store, the primary supermarket then available to thousands of families in west and north Oakland.

"We organized our membership and constituency to the extent that the local black community refused to shop there. We set up a continual picket line, from the hour the store opened until it closed. We forced Safeway to remove table grapes from its shelves," recalled a party member who walked the line regularly. "We believed, as most people did, that UFW would spread nationwide, fighting on behalf of farm workers throughout the nation. Safeway was so outdone that they contacted the Party, capitulating to the farm workers demands.

The U.S. labor movement had been devastated by the passing of several labor laws, the 1935 National Labor Relations Act and the Taft-Hartley amendment to the act. Farm workers, service, and other low-paid workers, jobs usually held by minorities and women, were excluded from the coverage of these extremely restrictive laws. It was because of that lack of coverage that the UFWOC was able to build up support and strength nation-wide, to the point that a Gallup poll announced that 73% of the population backed the just struggle of the farm workers, at its height.

Chavez's organizing had begun a full decade before he launched his first union attempt, the National Farm Workers Association. Chavez combined the community organizing method with labor organizing. That was the key to his later success; that, and his ability to attract and organize others who knew how to run the strikes and the boycott tactic.

La Causa became a "cause celebre" and thousands of students and liberals joined behind Chavez's banner and the need and fight for the rights of farm workers.

After an historic victory against the massive Heublein Corporation and the "Wine Nine" of White River Valley, George Meany, AFL-CIO president, strongly urged Chavez's realignment with the AFL-CIO, after having "disowned" UFWOC for having gone ahead with the labor action. Membership began to decline with his decision to affiliate with the government-mandated and controlled labor bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO and a continued organizational practice disallowing membership of non-citizens in the union.

In 1975, then newly- elected California Governor Jerry Brown convinced Chavez, who by Brown's own description was skeptical, to accept what became the state's Agricultural Labor Relations Act. Chavez spent most of his life after Brown left office fighting against the increasingly hostile bureaucracy the act had created.

The whole world will mourn the death of a great leader. Cesar Chavez brought fire, imagination and hope to generations which include in it an entire section that expected nothing but pain, animosity and contempt.

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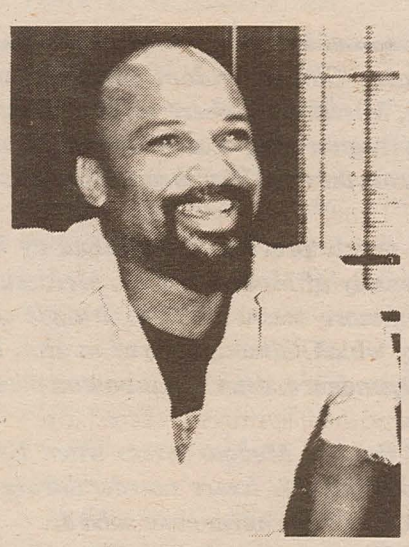
Free Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) Political Prisoner U.S.



Former Black Panther leader, Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt) has now spent 21 years in California prisons and is one of the world's longest-held political prisoners, according to the International Campaign to Free Geronimo.

The government's own documents indicate that Geronimo is innocent of the crime for which he was convicted: the senseless murder of a white school teacher on a Santa Monica tennis court in 1968. At the time of this killing, Geronimo was attending a week-long Black Panther Central Committee meeting 400 miles away in Oakland, California. While the FBI had Geronimo and the Panther leadership under constant surveillance, the government claims to have mysteriously "lost" their records for this period.

Police agent Julio Butler was the main witness against Geronimo. It was his testimony that convicted Pratt. In 1968 Butler infiltrated the Southern California Chapter of the Black Panther Party, in which Geronimo was a principal leader and provided information to the FBI. The truth about Butler as well as the suppression of statements indicating that others had done the killing, the planting of police spies in the defense camp, and many other abuses of justice were discovered only years later when Geronimo won access to FBI files.

In the Spring of 1991, armed with compelling new evidence of Geronimo's innocence, which included sworn affidavits by former Panther leaders Bobby Seale, David Hilliard, Kathleen Cleaver, and Emory Douglas that they were with Geronimo in Oakland at the time of the Santa Monica crime, attorneys filed a motion for a new trial. Within 24 hours of the delivery of hundreds of pages and evidence, the Los Angeles courts issued a one sentence ruling turning down the case.

Kept in prison solely because of his political history, Geronimo had served more time than murderers and criminals whose guilt was never in question, but whose ideology was more in keeping with the government's. When Dan White shot San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and gay County Supervisor Harvey Milk to death, he served less than five years in prison. KKK and Aryan Nations leaders Richard Butler and Robert Miles, charged in connection with bank robberies and racist murders, were freed by an all-white jury in 1988. In 1992, Los Angeles exploded when four white police were acquitted of the savage videotaped beating of Rodney King.

Geronimo refuses to apologize for a murder he did not commit. And he will not ever renounce his political beliefs. As it was for Nelson Mandela, Geronimo is in prison for his principles.

For more information about the efforts to free Geronimo contact the following:

International Campaign to Free Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)

P.O. Box 3585
Oakland, California 94609
(510) 268-0979

Los Angeles Chapter International
Campaign to Free
Geronimo ji Jaga

P.O. Box 781-328
Los Angeles, CA 90016
(213) 758-6888
Write Geronimo at this address:

Geronimo ji Jaga (Pratt)

No. B40319
P.O. Box 1902B 1A208L
Tehachapi, California 93581

NO LAW — NO RIGHTS

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

A federal civil rights trial in Philadelphia charging 7 former Graterford Prison guards with violating the civil rights of a number of prisoners by severely beating them, while they were shackled and cuffed hand and foot in November 1989, revealed, in glaring fashion, how, in prisons, there is no law—there are no rights.

Despite the guilty pleas and damning testimony of 5 ex-guards, that they and their colleagues maliciously beat, kicked, stomped, blackjacked and tasered (that is, used a hand-held electric shocking device) prisoners who committed no institutional offenses, a civil jury acquitted the 7 of virtually all charges in February 1993.

One juror was quoted as saying although it was proven that prisoners were badly beaten, no conspiracy was proven by U.S. prosecutors.

One prisoner, who suffered from AIDS and thus had less internal resources with which to rebound from the horrific physical and psychological trauma he suffered in the beating, has since died.

In the month-long trial it was revealed guards thought 19 prisoners transferred from Camp Hill Prison shortly after rioters and rebels nearly leveled the central Pa. facility to a pile of smoldering ashes were part of the rioting crews that ripped it apart.

In fact, the 19 were non-rioters, who were only too glad to be leaving what came to be called "Camp Hell," and to be coming to the state's largest, and Blackest prison, Graterford.

Instead, they were leaving the fire, only to get simmered in the frying pan, so to speak.

At Graterford, whose massive haunting walls seemed to offer some relief from the raging literal and psychic infernos of Camp Hill, the 19 men met uniformed hatred and naked brutality, as they were beaten, kicked and terrorized by government officials sworn to protect the illusive "peace" in prisons—guards who, acting on nothing but assumptions, assaulted over a dozen men on the notion that they were "troublemakers."

Some, those few who could navigate the treacherous straits and shoals of civil litigation, sued state officials for damages.

Others bound up their wounds and blended into the wall while waiting for terms to expire, so they could be "free" again.

Several testified in the federal prosecution.

One died.

But all found out how fragile the very system that stole their very freedom was when the state committed crimes against them.

All found out that words like "justice," "law," "civil rights," and yes, "crime" have different and elastic meanings depending upon whose "rights" were violated, who committed what "crimes" against whom, and whether one works for the system, or against it.

For those people, almost a million at last count, who wear the label "prisoner" around their necks, there is no law—there is no justice—there are no "rights."

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All Black City of Mound Bayou, Mississippi: A Community of Cooperation

by Earnest McBride

Along the stretch of Highway 61, the "Blues" highway between Vicksburg and Memphis, one small town seems just as quaint and indistinct as the next. This is the Delta, the Black Belt, the "black" counties of historical notoriety.

If the traveler stops at the half way point along this route, he would be in Mound Bayou, which, with its 2,900 people, is a town of historical importance.

It was a hundred years ago when a biracial group of businessmen, planters and railroad officials got together in Vicksburg and set in motion a plan to develop the still wild areas of the Mississippi Delta. The all-black city of Mound Bayou resulted from this plan.

Even though the real work only began in July of 1887, the idea of a "community of cooperation" similar to the Mound Bayou experiment dated back to many years before the Civil War.

Many different accounts of the surrounding events exist, no two of which agree exactly. But a fairly reliable account can be pieced together from several reliable sources. The most complete treatment is J.S. Hermann's 1981 book *The Pursuit of a Dream*.

The pivot man in the 1887 meeting of minds was former Secretary of State Jim Hill of Vicksburg, reputed by some historians as having been the most capable black politician in Mississippi's history. He brought together Jones Hamilton, a redeemed white planter and government labor contractor, and George W. Mc Ginnis, land manager for the Louisville, New Orleans and Texas railroad, which later merged with the Illinois Central.

But the focal point of the group was its fourth member, Isaiah Thornton Montgomery, the second son of Benjamin Thornton Montgomery. Both father and son had been slaves of Joseph Davis, the rich elder brother of Jefferson Davis, United States Senator and President of the Confederacy. While still slaves, both Montgomerys had been business managers of the Davis brother's plantations, located 15 miles south of Vicksburg. And in the first decade after the Civil War, they had been legal owners of all the Davis property.

Even today in Mound Bayou, Isaiah T. Montgomery's presence looms over the city like no other founder's anywhere else in Mississippi. And though his personality remains alive today, Isaiah Montgomery's Vicksburg roots are merely a hazy memory for the citizens of Mound Bayou. Yet it is in Warren County and Vicksburg that Montgomery's real character was formed, thanks to the exceptional cooperation between his father Benjamin and Joseph Davis, who himself had long dreamed of building a "community of cooperation," according to Hermann.

Why is Montgomery still so popular in Mound Bayou? And why is the story of his life in Vicksburg and Warren County so little known in the city he founded? Some residents of Mound Bayou recently mulled over these questions.

"I was born and reared here," said Willie T. Woodley, who dates her birth to 1915, nine years before the death of the Founding Father. "Mr. Montgomery would come to the school and talk to us on Founders Day. Then it was just the 12th of July. Now it's the whole week. He would urge us to keep in mind the founding of the city and the people who had worked so hard to make a town out of the wilderness."

Although her parents were the first children brought from Vicksburg to Mound Bayou after the men had cleared some of the woods and marsh land, she recalls hearing very little about their lives before coming.

"The older people didn't stress their background in Vicksburg. When we were growing up, most of those who had come with Mr. Montgomery were dead. But he would remind us that they had achieved just as much as, and that we were just as good as the white people around us. And they, the whites, respected us."

Somewhat different was the experiences of Zee Anderson Barron, who for 10 years was a speech and English instructor at the college now called Jackson State University. She had lived with her older sister in Vicksburg while still a child. She finished 8th grade at Magnolia Ave. School, which later became Bowman High.

In the 9th grade, Mrs. Barron said, she moved with her sister's family to Mound Bayou, "many years ago," she chuckled. Her brother-in-law, P.M. Smith in 1941 founded the now closed Taborian Hospital which served all the Delta area.

"I remember Magnolia Elementary school very vividly," Mrs. Barron said "at school we always had a very good relationship between teachers and students.

"I like Vicksburg, especially the military park and the walks we used to take along the river. Oh, yes, I do remember Vicksburg. And I still have some good friends there."

A retired bank manager, Mrs. Woodley estimated that fewer than 80 present-day Mound Bayou residents trace their ancestry back to the first settlers. She pointed out that 17 mansions and other buildings built by the founders remain standing.

"We were always self-sufficient," she said. "We never had a white mayor or a white anything over us. Not in the 72 years that I have been here. When we were growing up, we were more secure and more disciplined. Your mother was my mother. We were quite religious. But education was stressed most of all. And you didn't dare stop at the local store with your school books under your arm."

The awareness of the ties between Mound Bayou and Vicksburg have faded with time, said Melbourne J. Crowe, 54, former city Alderman and editor of the now-defunct Mound Bayou Voice. "Today, there just isn't any great amount of awareness of the association between Mound Bayou and Vicksburg," he said. "I guess that most of us are no more aware of what's happening today in Vicksburg than in Akron, Ohio."

"Some of us are aware of the historical link, but just barely," Crowe added, pointing out that his father came to Mound Bayou as a ten-year-old in the year of its founding.

"For years after the founding, the ties were close. The people here still

Continued on page 19

Earnest McBride, Southern States Correspondent for the* Commemorator, *is a native of Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he is a frequent contributing writer to newspapers in the region on African American history, and on political conflicts in the south from the Civil War through the present day.

In this issue we offer readers an article previously published by Mr. McBride on the historic black community of Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Future issues will include coverage of more recent political struggle concerning the future of this community which, although small in size, has provided an example of self-help, independence, determination and perserverence far beyond its immediate area.

Mr. McBride was an associate of the late Medgar Evers when Evers organized the Vicksburg NAACP chapter in 1958. Evers' murder during the civil rights campaign "Mississippi Summer" has never been solved.

McBride later attended Tougaloo College in Mississippi, Los Angeles City College, served two years in the Army, and received a B.A. degree in journalism from Cal State-Los Angeles in 1968. He also holds a Masters degree in Linguistics from San Francisco State University.

In 1982, he returned to Vicksburg, where his father had been publisher of the Vicksburg Weekly and Mississippi Weekly from the 1930's, and his mother, a cook and waitress at a local cafe, brought the first campaign for integration of public facilities to town in 1964. In recent years he has organized demands that public officials seek more stable and productive alternatives to promotion of casino gambling as the purported salvation of southern economies, abandoned by historic sources of agricultural and industrial employment — a false solution that black elected public officials working with dominant white economic interests have often fallen prey to.

The* Commemorator *invites and encourages letters, suggestions, questions and news reports from our readers in the southeast. Help us continue to bring you all the news of low-income and minority communities that a controlled press will not print.

SUICIDE, JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDES OR LYNCH LAW??

The number of people who have died, under questionable circumstances, while in police custody, is on the rise. Citizen groups are questioning whether these deaths are really murders, suicides or justifiable homicides, as officials claim. Forty-six Mississippi jail inmate hangings have, for example, been quietly ruled suicides, between 1987 and March 1993. This is at least one hanging, ruled suicide, every 40 days, over a five-year-three-and-a-half-month period. Mississippi civil and human rights groups have forced the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to investigate whether Mississippi inmates are committing suicide at alarming rates, or being executed by law enforcement authorities without trial.

Official entry of suicide as cause of arrestee and inmate deaths has increased with alarming frequency. Official entry of suicide on jail inmate death certificates appeared with the following frequencies in 1988: 66.6% in Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, and Washington; 75% in Wisconsin and Oklahoma; 80% in Minnesota, Colorado, and New Mexico; 100% in Maine, South Dakota, Nebraska, West Virginia, Idaho and Utah.

...more than 9 civilian deaths in police custody each month, over 2 per week and at least 1 every 3 days.

The number of arrestees who do not survive police custody to stand before a judge is also on the rise. Four hundred and forty-five people have died, for example, in Texas police custody, over a period of three years and 10 months, between 1987 and 1991. This is more than nine civilian deaths in police custody each month, over two per week and at least one every three days. Two thousand federal civil rights investigations, of Texas police since 1984, have not prevented 445 civilian deaths in custody between 1987 and 1991.

No criminal charges were filed, against Texas police in 99% of civilian deaths. Only five police officers have been convicted and three of these convictions were for the same civilian victim. Resisting arrest, suicide or natural causes was the official justification claimed in 100% of civilian deaths.

In Boston, Massachusetts, an African American Boston Police officer claimed he had accidently pumped several fatal bullets into one of his neighbors, an African American juvenile male. Another Boston Police officer claimed that he fatally shot an African American male in the back of the head because this person was running toward him with what could have been a weapon. No weapon was found in either case. The low-income community was left without an adequate explanation as to how a trained police officer could accidentally pump several bullets into a child he knew, or shoot a person in the back of the head unless that person was trying to run away from and not toward the officer.

In Miami two African American motorcyclists were fatally shot from behind by a Miami Police officer for allegedly attempting to flee the scene of a traffic violation.

In Miami two African American motorcyclists were fatally shot from behind by a Miami Police officer for allegedly attempting to flee the scene of a traffic violation. This is yet another civilian shooting death at the hands of Miami police, which touched off explosive and incendiary rioting in Miami's low income communities. In the pre-Rodney King era there was Michael Stewart, Eleanor Bumpers, Harold Brown (several community residents reported hearing Harold beg for his life, while onlookers were ordered by police to close their windows seconds before Philadelphia Police pumped multiple bullets into Brown), all of these citizens died in a hail of police bullets. Each killing was ruled justifiable homicide. There are hundreds of other examples, too numerous to be given here.

The increase in the number of people who have died under questionable circumstances throughout the U.S. has prompted citizens, civil and human rights groups to question whether lynch law, i.e., murder by law enforcement officials without benefit of trial, or suicides and justifiable homicides are the true causes of citizen deaths, in many more cases than previously imagined.

SOURCES:

1. Mississippi hangings:

a.) U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (Interim Chairman Bobby Doctor);

b.) Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Rev. Joseph P. Lowery);

c.) National Association for the Advancement of Colored People;

d.) U.S. Attorney General (Janet Reno);

2. Jail inmate suicides:

a.) U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics 1991 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, Table 6.44, Jail inmate deaths by cause of death, region and State, year ending June 30.

3. Texas Police in custody deaths:

a.) New York Times, November 18, 1991, "445 in Texas have died in custody since 1987, but few police charged" (Associated Press);

b.) Dallas Morning Star. ■

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ARCHIVES

The BLACK PANTHER
BLACK COMMUNITY NEWS SERVICE
VOLUME 1 APRIL 25, 1967 NUMBER 1
P.O. BOX 8641 OAK. CALIF. EMERYVILLE BRANCH
PUBLISHED BY THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY FOR SELF DEFENSE

WHY WAS DENZIL DOWELL KILLED

APRIL FIRST 3:50 a.m.

Brothers and Sisters of the Richmond community, here is the view of the family's side of the death of Denzil Dowell as compiled by the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, concerned citizens, and the Dowell family. As you know, April 1st, 1967, Denzil Dowell (age 22), was shot and killed by an "officer of the Martinez Sheriff's Department," so read the newspaper.

But there are too many unanswered questions that have been raised by the Dowell family and other neighbors in the North Richmond community. Questions that don't meet the satisfaction of the killing of Denzil. The Richmond Police, the Martinez Sheriff's Department, and the Richmond Independent would have us black people believe something contrary to Mrs. Dowell's accusation. That is, her son was "unjustifiably" murdered by a racist cop.

There are too many questionable facts supporting the Dowell family's point of view.

These questionable facts are as follows:

1. Denzil Dowell was unarmed so how can six bullet holes and shot gun blasts be considered "justifiable homicide"?

2. Why did the newspaper and police say only three shots were fired when the coroner's report and surrounding neighbors established the fact that six to ten shots were used and heard?

3. The police and the newspaper stated that the time of the shooting was 4:49 A.M. to 5:01 A.M., yet Denzil Dowell's sister and neighbors in the area testified to hearing shots at 3:50 A.M.

4. Only Richmond police were first seen on the scene; not until later (an hour or so), around 4:50 A.M. were Martinez sheriffs seen on the scene where Denzil Dowell was murdered.

5. The police reported that Denzil Dowell was running and jumped a fence and ran to jump another when he was shot. The Dowell family knows that Denzil had been injured in the hip in a car accident some time ago and after leaving the hospital could not run much at all, let alone jump two fences with a hammer in his hand.

6. The lot that Denzil was supposed to have run across between the two fences is an old car junk yard loaded with grease and oil and why wasn't oil found on his shoes?

7. The coroner reported that Denzil Dowell bled to death. Where was the blood where Denzil Dowell lay? Denzil's sister remembers that night and says she saw very little blood. She said she never saw a pool of blood and yet the coroner said he bled to death after being shot ten times.

Continued on next page

"I BELIEVE THE POLICE MURDERED MY SON" SAYS THE MOTHER OF DENZIL DOWELL.

ARCHIVES

8.Denzil Dowell was found by his brother and friend and they noticed that no attempt had been made by police to summon a doctor or to save his life.

9. The family of Denzil Dowell has been denied the right to see or have the clothes that Denzil was murdered in. They want the clothes to see how many bullet holes the clothes have in them. The family was also denied the right to take pictures of his body so they could check for numerous bullet holes.

10. The newspaper came out with a statement of "justifiable homicide" 2 hours before the jury gave its verdict. The foreman on the jury could not read. A biased jury of 10 white people and two "Negroes" protected the racist cop who murdered Denzil Dowell.

11. The Dowell family also notes a very important fact. The cop who shot Denzil Dowell knew him by name and had stopped Denzil and hollered to him many times, "Denzil Dowell give me your identification." The cop had at other times threatened to kill him.

12. The Dowell family and concerned citizens have called for a Grand Jury investigation and are demanding that all law enforcement officers change their policy of killing people over property.

13. On April 18th a group of concerned citizens went to discuss this proposal with Sheriff Young of Martinez. The citizens enumerated the areas of doubt in the case of Denzil Dowell and requested that the officer who admitted doing the shooting be removed from duty pending an investigation. The sheriff REFUSED to hear our request and we consider his action to be a racist disregard for the reasonable request of black taxpayers and citizens concerned with the survival of black people.

LET US ORGANIZE
TO DEFEND OURSELVES

"We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self-defense." (from the program of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, Point No.7 of "What We Believe")

WHY MUST BLACK PEOPLE ORGANIZE?

— The murder of Denzil Dowell April 1, 1967 here in North Richmond;

— The murder of two Black Brothers a week before last Christmas here in North Richmond;

— The brutal beating of a black woman here in Richmond;

— The killing of George Thompson in Hunters Point, San Francisco in September, 1966;

— The beating of a 14 year old girl in East Oakland in October, 1966.

These are only a few of the murders and brutal beatings by racist cops that have happened and been reported in the newspaper and are known about in the black community.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WE MUST UNITE.

MANY OTHER MURDERS AND BRUTAL BEATINGS HAVE TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT US DOING MUCH OF ANYTHING, BUT LET'S STOP IT NOW!

WITH SOME
REAL
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POLITICAL
ACTION.

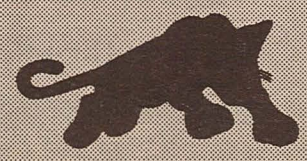
Denzil Dowell to Rodney King: In 25 Years Things Have Only Gotten Worse

Over twenty five years ago in 1967 Brother Denzil Dowell, 22, was murdered by a Contra Costa County California sheriff. In this month's Archives, we present Vol. I, Issue 1 of the "Black Panther Party — Black Community News Service," later redefined by Huey P. Newton as the Intercommunal News Service, which opened with a call to action that built the Black Panther Party into a force in the community for the first time.

As the Dowell case investigation spearheaded by the Party uncovered and publicized inherent racism in the system and became a leading force in fighting to expose it, Party membership grew by the thousands in a matter of months. The focus on the Denzil Dowell case by the Party brought the issues of police brutality, the Constitutional rights to bear arms and freedom of speech to the community through the leadership of a completely community based organization.

In the time between Denzil Dowell's murder and the vicious beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles Police department, the only change in conditions for the poor is that they have grown worse, while the incidence of police brutality and murder for members of the Black and low-income communities has increased. In neither case was justice done. Both cases required the exclusion of evidence to arrive at an unjust verdict, the victim was labelled a villain — a felon — and the juries were overwhelmingly white and not the peers of the victims.

In response to raging unemployment, famine, and crime in our communities, the government continues to offer no solution for us. Cases like those of Rodney King and Denzil Dowell happen in our communities every day. The government's message that only violent protest will force change is not a message that will bring us to victory. To obtain justice will require building our own organization, based in the community, and independent of the government. That will give us the means through which we can end the conditions that caused the death of Denzil Dowell and the beating of Rodney King and the thousands of those that occur each day across the country.



Motion Picture Review

Malcolm X

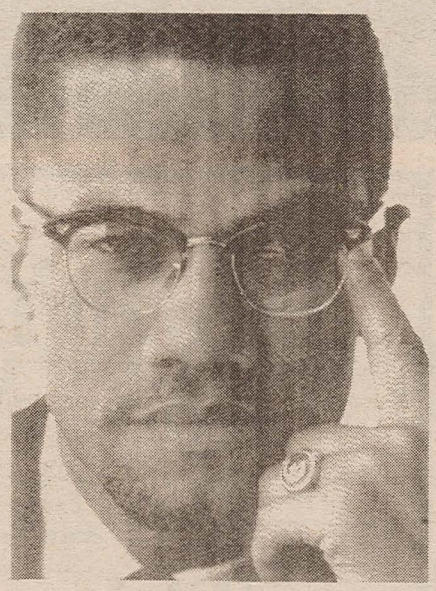
By Lisa Anne Burns

America and the world waited for *Malcolm X* through many months of intense publicity and T-shirt sales. Like this writer, many of us followed the build-up eagerly and watched the sales of T-shirts, hats, buttons, potato chips and many other items with his name on them. Now that we have seen Spike Lee's motion picture, it is a poignant memory and part of our personal history, as Malcolm X is part of the country's.

This latest of Spike Lee's work is difficult to understand, however, without having read the book from which the motion picture was made, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by the late Alex Haley. It is one of the most enduring works of the '60s and by now probably one of the most widely read — especially by the growing portion of the population too young to have been there. (This reviewer is in her early 20s.)

The movie doesn't show Malcolm as the great leader he became, but displays his natural talent for organizing and charismatic leadership. What was he trying to gain by forming his own organization after the Nation of Islam and its ideals became dust in his mouth and a danger to his and his family's lives? Why was he followed by white men, obviously police, in his trip to Islam's holy places. Why did the FBI help the thugs who assassinated him find his secret hotel room and plant a bug in it?

Comparison with the book gives the answers. The motion picture didn't start with his stormy and destitute childhood. Throughout, it lacks the understanding that the country is falling apart. There are millions of poor and hungry people, including as many children, who cannot continue to live the way they are now forced to, and have lived always except, to cite the most recent example of governmental benevolence, when Lyndon Johnson's administration threw billions of dollars at them to



quiet their ever-growing demands and active rebellion against white America, or "the system," or capitalism. They need food, clothing, homes and *money*. They need jobs so they can feed their families. Some people now are trying to live his life by buying clothes with his name on them, which is a way for someone to make money at our expense.

Malcolm X saw the suffering, oppression and exploitation, and he spoke to them and to the people. After his multi-faceted pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, he saw he needed to lead fighters, not a group of only his own race. But as he spoke, other ears were listening.

Spike Lee would have done better to leave some hope at the end, teaching his massive audiences that people need to organize and fight for real change. Instead, Malcolm's death was shown as hopeless — that nothing can be done about what he lived and fought for. In short, the motion picture had no politics. The book and, at some point, Malcolm's life were inspired by politics. His life and his memory are a vital part of the recent history of the movement for change. His life should be inspiring young people now to do something to make that change in the country, instead of using it for someone to make personal profit.

Lisa Anne Burns is a second generation organizer, daughter of the late Robert T. Burns, who was a founder of Eastern Farm Workers Association, and a Panther.

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A Tribute To Malcolm X

(El Hajj Malik El Shabazz)

Omaha, Nebraska in the 20s and 30s had no shortage of bigots. Racial oppression dominated the lives of black people there as it did in black communities North, South, East and West. The only difference in Omaha was that on May 19, 1925, Malcolm K. Little, who later became known world-wide as Malcolm X, was born to Earl and Louise Little.

Malcolm X's father, the Reverend Earl Little, was a Baptist minister and an organizer for Marcus Garvey's U.N.I.A. (Universal Negro Improvement Association). This organization, in the 20s grew phenomenally because many blacks wanted independence from the conditions of racial and economic oppression, and unemployment was on the rise. After WWI ended in 1917 many U.S. soldiers returned home to displace many blacks who were employed during the war. In 1929 the stock market crashed; Malcolm was only four years old.

The Reverend Earl Little was run out of town more than once. His Garvey teaching created a stir among local Negroes and Whites, which brought him in confrontation with a local white hate group, The Black Legionnaires. "I remember being suddenly snatched awake into a frightening confusion of pistol shots and shouting and smoke and flames. My father had shouted and shot at two white men who had set the fire and were running away."

A few year later the Reverend Little was killed; his body was found mutilated. According to Malcolm, "Negroes in Lansing have always whispered that he was attacked, and then laid across some tracks for a streetcar to run over him. His body was cut almost in half." The local black community belied that it was the white Black Legion "had finally got him."

Malcolm held great admiration for his father: "The image of him that made me proudest was his crusading and militant campaigning with the words of Marcus Garvey."

In 1941 Malcolm went to live with his half-sister, Ella Mae Collins, a proud black women who had a great influence on his thinking throughout most of his adult life. She was her own person. Moving from Lansing, Michigan to Boston was a pivotal point in his life. At 16 he recognized the class delineation within the black race of the big cities. Boston, unlike Lansing, was more stratified with a negro middle class — a black bourgeoisie. Whereas the Blacks in Lansing were mostly of the working class with hardly any pretensions of whiteness

"I know now, of course, that what I was really seeing was only a big-city version of those 'successful' Negro bootblacks and janitors back in Lansing. The only difference was that the ones in Boston had been brainwashed even more thoroughly. They prided themselves on being incomparably more 'cultured,' 'cultivated,' 'dignified,' and better off than their black brethren down in the ghetto, which was no further away than you could throw a rock."

Boston introduced Malcolm to the fast-life of hustling. Straight out of Lansing, Malcolm was taken in by the glitz of the streets, the nightclubs, pool halls, the numbers, the music, the women and clothing, all which go with the scene. Eventually this lifestyle led him to prison where he served five years for burglary.

While serving time, Malcolm came into contact with members of the Nation Of Islam which opened up a whole new way of thinking, communicating with Elijah Muhammad, the leader of the all black religious organization. He spent much of his time reading which also opened his mind to greater heights. "I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading opened to me. I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive."

Upon release from Massachusetts State Prison in 1952, Malcolm went to Detroit, where he lived with his brother, Wilfred, and worked briefly as a salesman in a two-bit furniture store located in the heart of the black ghetto. Here he experienced the day-to-day rip-offs by the store owner, whose exploitation of poor blacks was a way of doing business: "Nothing Down advertisement drew poor Negroes into that store like flypaper. It was a shame, the way they paid three and four times as much as what the furniture cost... I would see

Continued on page 17

What You Should Know About TB

FACTS ABOUT TB

Tuberculosis could have been wiped out years ago. There are medicines that stop it. Most people who get treatment for TB recover. They get well again and lead normal lives. TB is a disease of poverty. It spreads wherever people are denied adequate food, shelter, clothing, heat and medical care. Once it takes hold in a community, anybody can get TB — old or young, rich or poor, men, women, or children — anyone.

If you are not a citizen of the United States and you get tuberculosis, you have a right to medical care right here. Legally, you CANNOT be told to leave this country because you seek treatment. But you may have to fight for it.

HOW TB IS CAUGHT

TB is caused by a germ. It is not caused by dirt or bad blood. It is not inherited. It does develop most often among the poor and low-income who because of their lack of adequate income are hard pressed to afford adequate food, clothing, housing and health care to ward off such diseases. However, once TB is active it spreads indiscriminately to rich and poor alike.

A person with active TB sneezes or coughs or spits on the sidewalk, and sends the germs into the air. Anybody can breathe them in and become infected. But a person taking medication regularly for TB is NOT infectious.

SIGNS OF TB

TB usually gives no early warning. You don't feel sick at first. After a person has had TB for some time, he may begin to feel tired all the time, have a fever, sweat at night, lose weight, catch colds easily, cough a lot, or spit up blood.

HOW TB IS FOUND

The test tells if TB germs are in the body. A small amount of harmless fluid is put under the skin on the arm. Two or three days later, that place on the arm is checked. If there is little or no change, TB germs have not entered the body. If the spot is red and raised up, the person may have TB germs inside him or her. But this does NOT mean he/she has TB. It is very important to remember this. The next step is usually a chest x-ray.

By public health policy this test should be available free to anyone who might have been exposed. But even county hospitals charge up to $20 for the test. If you are denied a test because you can't pay for it, call an organization that provides advocacy to help you fight for your rights.

The skin test, however, only tells if you have ever been exposed to TB, not if you have it. Some researchers believe the test, with modified TB germs, can activate the dormant TB virus.

Another test for TB is the TB sputum culture test. This test takes about 30-days to complete, but its results are definite as to whether you have TB in your lungs.

CHEST X-RAY

Is a screening test best used on suspect cases?

If TB is present, it is probably in the lungs. A chest x-ray takes a picture of the lungs and shows the doctor if there are signs of TB. You will not feel anything when the x-ray is taken. An occasional x-ray will do no harm. Again, DON'T take no for an answer because you don't have money to pay for an X-ray. Independent non-government funded organizations can help you get the diagnosis and treatment that you may need.

HOW TB IS CURED

There are excellent medicines to fight TB. These may be pills, or a liquid to drink, or shots. Usually a patient gets pills. TB can be cured ONLY if a patient keeps taking his/her pills. The medicines are expensive and you have to take 3 different medicines now, to kill the TB.

WHY PILLS ARE IMPORTANT

If a patient stops taking his/her pills before the doctor says to stop, TB can come back. When it does it is often immune to the medication. Take the pills the doctor gives you.

THE CLINIC

Most patients who don't go to a hospital visit a clinic regularly. Hospital patients after they come home go to a clinic every few months for follow-up. A clinic visit may take an hour or more. The patient may have to wait to see the right person. But clinic visits are important. They help to speed up the patient's recovery.

THE FUTURE

TB need not be a serious disease. It could be wiped out. If our government used our tax money to insure jobs at decent pay — so everyone had food, shelter, heat and preventive health care, it would be gone. If treatment had not been defunded many years ago, TB would not be epidemic today. A patient can get well again, live with his/her family, and hold a job. He/she can lead his/her normal life again IF he/she takes his/her medicine regularly for as long as his/her doctor says.

The person who has had TB but has recovered must have a TB check-up at least once a year.

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YOUR SCENTS

Justice Was Not Served

Continued from page 1

"unspecified" people were planning to take "the three B's": Beverly Hills, Brentwood and Bel-Air, and other wealthy Los Angeles area neighborhoods.

Democrats and Republicans alike tend to agree on the jury verdict in the federal trial against the four white policemen accused of violating Rodney King's civil rights.

Attorney General Janet Reno said "Justice was done"—shortly before she took the "next logical step" on the Waco, Texas compound where she sent in federal agents resulting in an inferno leaving over eighty women, men and children dead.

Governor Pete Wilson, appearing at a church rally the day after the verdict, said, "There's much to praise God for." Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley went on television and said, "The verdict proved that the justice system works for all."

Totally overlooked by those who would so quickly, so loudly rush to exonerate the U.S. justice system is the fact that no investigation has been made into the processes that led to the officers' acquittal in the first trial, held in Simi Valley with a virtually all-white suburban jury. No one mentioned anything about the passengers in the car with King at the time of the beating, Bryant Allen or Freddie Helms. (Helms died in a mysterious, uninvestigated car accident before the Simi Valley trial.) Police beat both of them, too. None of the other 19 city, county and state Highway Patrol officers on the scene while King, Allen and Helms were being brutally beaten were included in the trial.

By providing two convictions while diverting the issues of the trial away from the systemic racialism, a mocking semblance of justice was bought. From the highest level of government power down to some of the black churches across the country, many established "leaders" bought into the justice syndrome. President Clinton said the jury "really tried to do justice" and that the American people can take pride in that.

Political Machination Alive and Well

The jury deliberated for some 40 hours over seven days, during which they were sequestered at a secret location, and reached its verdict on Friday afternoon, April 16. In the courtroom the next morning, Judge John G. Davies and Los Angeles Police Commissioner Stanley Sheinbaum conveyed to reporters that although the verdicts had been reached at 3:45 p.m. Friday afternoon, the judge had held the announcement until Saturday morning at the requests of police officials, who feared violent disturbances later in the day with the freeways filled and the weekend beginning.

Judge Davies had to obtain concurrence of U.S. prosecuting attorney Steven Clymer and Justice Department attorney Barry Kowalski, along with that of the defense attorneys, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley and Police Commissioner Sheinbaum, at least, in making that highly unusual decision. Judge Davies ordered all parties to be in court at 7 a.m. the next morning.

The explanation given was that the jury had asked to "delay delivering the verdict" to the court until they had returned to the hotel and packed their belongings. However, police officials had formally requested at least 12 hours advance notice in order to properly place their forces.

The Largest U.S. Military Occupation Since Desert Storm.

Police were not prepared 28 years ago when Watts exploded after the killing of a black motorist. They were not prepared for the depth of community response to the verdict in the state Rodney King trial. The prescribed scenario for the recent federal trial was a massive show of military force combined with a token conviction of the minimum number of officers needed to avoid another uprising.

"Beatings like Rodney King's happen at least three times a night in every major city and other poor communities throughout the country."

According to a Commemorator distributor, "Beatings like Rodney King's happen at least three times a night in every major city and other poor communities throughout the country. The Black Panther created the kind of organization that called for black and low-income communities to arm themselves against the forces of the local police, acting in the manner of an occupying army." Indeed, point number seven of the Black Panther Party 10-Point Program calls for the an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color, and all oppressed people inside the United States.

Police Lay In Wait

According to Berkeley, California activist Bonita Best, "Police cars park on corners of streets of neighbohoods where the poor black and Latino communities live. They lie in wait like rats as they did when Rodney King came by that night. They routinely stop any car matching a standard description for the particular racial or ethnic group. They automatically find 'suspicious activity' warranting detention, or an 'alleged crime' in progress."

An occasional volunteer for the Commemorator from a white suburban area pointed out that police have another pattern where he lives: cruising past bars to record license numbers in the parking lot, then laying in wait for those who are seen twice in one night a few hours apart. "They consider this probable cause for a stop on suspicion of drunk driving" he said, but such stops are done to bring in money from people who have it to pay, and are handled with considerably less violence than in areas where suppression and control is the primary purpose.

The need to organize as well as act in the fight for justice was laid out by Black Panther Party founder Huey P. Newton over 25 years ago. "In addition to our patrols and confrontations with the police, I did a lot of recruiting in pool halls and bars, sometimes working twelve to sixteen hours a day. I passed out leaflets with our ten-point program, explaining each point to all who would listen. Going deep into the community like this, I invariably became involved in whatever was happening; this day-to-day contact became an important part of our organizing effort... This recruiting had an interesting ramification in that I tried to transform many of the so-called criminal activities going on in the street into something political, although this had to be done gradually. Instead of trying to eliminate these activities — numbers, hot goods, drugs — I attempted to channel them into significant community actions." *(Revolutionary Suicide, page 126 and 127).*

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America's Gulag

Continued from page 2

and other atrocities too numerous to mention here.

The state under the "tricknology guise" of this liberal left cover dispatched its right wing elite FBI, CIA, COINTELPRO death and discreditation squads against every organization with remote potential of inspiring the struggle for liberation vis-a-vis correct analysis, line and methodology. Assassination, disinformation, bribery, duress, torture, frame-up and every species of covert state terror are the rule as opposed to the exception. A literal law enforcement fifth column of informants, infiltrators, agent provocateurs, artful deceivers, and other "Judas" types were unleashed on seek and destroy missions in and out of prison.

The organizations most devastated were those avowing socialist principles and which met one or more of the following conditions: (1) had not sufficiently buried themselves in the community vis-a-vis meticulously building class based, economic (in a state of becoming political) community-oriented benefit and survival programs; (2) who had too narrowly defined membership strata, e.g., ex-

Lil' Bobby Hutton

clusively based on race; (3) prematurely concentrated on "military armed foco" which the ruling class media press lords deliberately overemphasized, justifying Fred Hampton, Mark Clark, Bobby Hutton style state sponsored murders. These fascist blitzkriegs of the 60's, 70's and 80's gave rise to the POW's and PP's currently held in America's dungeons.

Tip of the Iceberg

POW's and PP's allegedly associated with dissident political organizations in the U.S., received "death of life sentences" in one out of two cases, before American courts, between 1970 and 1989. A survey of 92 sentences imposed on 79 POW's and PP's, revealed that 48 percent received life or death sentences. The Black Panther Party was extremely hard hit. Eighty-six percent of the sentences imposed on 18 reputed BPP members or associates were either death or life sentences. Seventy percent of African American/Black POW's and PP's surveyed received death or life sentences. Overall, 43.3 percent of POW's and PP's surveyed have sentence structures which include multiple life, life plus a number

Jonathan Jackson

of years or single life sentences. Two thousand nine hundred and thirty years, an average of 61 years per person and 54.25 years per sentences were distributed among this group.

Continuing Chronicle of State Sponsored Terror, Torture And Abuse

The abuse our POW's and PP's continuously suffer parallels "Penultimate NAZI State Terror." State terror tactics include death and long-term additional sentences based on government frame up, in retaliation for seeking to vindicate civil, constitutional and human rights while in prison, such as the case of Alberto Aranda who received an additional 40 years and Imani, who received death. Aranda had the audacity to testify against the Department of Correction in Ruiz v. Estelle, and Imani, an "uppity nigger," called for an end to what the court themselves described as "cruel and unusual punishment," which the court declined to correct.

Murder, attempted murder, brutalization, including violent sexual assault, medical care being denied, delayed or interfered with, as well as brainwashing experimentation as forced behavior modification test subjects, are all terror tactics the state has returned to time and time again.

Maria Haydee Torres was almost successfully murdered by an unexplained, near fatal dose of anesthesia, given by a state agent, after Maria had been beaten and held in solitary confinement over a year, without medical treatment despite ill health. Alejandrina Torres (repeated female victim of sexual assault and forced body cavity probes by male guards temporarily lost use of her right arm due to denial of medical care. Silvia Baraldini was denied treatment for uterine cancer.

Alejandrina Torres, Silvia Baraldini and Susan Rosenberg have been repeatedly (as well as many other POW's and PP's) forced to undergo government directed political brainwashing experimentation in Lexington, Kentucky's high security psycho-underground, psycho-control units. They were placed in totally isolated underground tomb-like caverns where they were often shackled by their wrists, waists and ankles while under 23 to 24 hour a day lock-down. Fresh air, sunlight, movement exercise were virtually nonexistent.

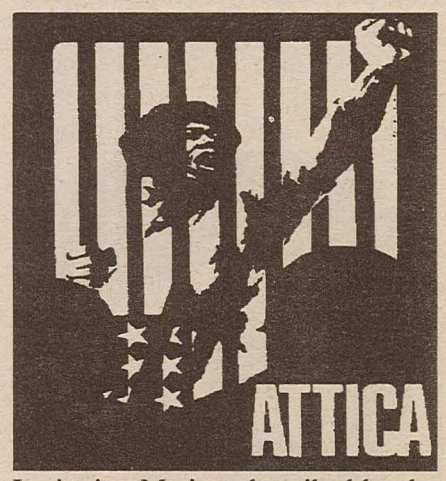
They were subjected to absolute isolation over unimaginably long periods of time in their underground gulags. There was total enforced silence. They were not allowed to speak to their keepers in their underground entombed world in which everything by government direction was painted white. Nor were their keepers, who were required to dress in all white, permitted to converse with them. The lights were required to remain on 24 hours around the clock.

Complete deprivation of all human association was combined with

Fred Hampton and Mark Clark

deprivation of sleep as a form of psycho-physical torture, while they were monitored on closed circuit cameras every second of every seemingly unending day. Visitation was censored by government approved, special appointments only. All correspondence and reading materials were arbitrarily censored without appeal or recourse. They were placed in these units not for disciplinary reasons or any infraction of rules but for reasons of classification only. *(Editor's note: We recommend study/discussion groups and classes show the video "Through the Wire" produced by Nina Rosenblum and available in consumer video outlets.)*

Compare the case of "San Quentin Six" Brother (George Jackson associate) Hugo Pinell Dahariki, who has been kept in solitary isolation for 20 years (almost as long as Nelson Mandela) as a form of torture. Brother Mumia Abdul Jamal has been on death row since the early 1980's. Leonard Peltier (American Indian Movement, "AIM"), Standing Deer and Albert Garcia were subjected to government ordered solitary confinement for 15 months, in retaliation for completing a 42 day fast drawing worldwide attention to the conditions at Federal Correctional



Institution Marion, described by the federal Circuit Court of Appeals for that circuit as horrible, depressing and sordid in the extreme, in its opinion and order refusing to do anything about those conditions.

Many other POW's and PP's like Alberto Aranda, Judith Clark and Ida Luz Rodriguez are repeatedly subjected to long term solitary confinement as a means of brainwashing and torture. POW's and PP's like Geronimo ji Jaga Pratt and Mark Cook have been repeatedly denied parole strictly on grounds of alleged political beliefs despite overwhelming support for their release from a wide base of support, including the community and even some prison officials. Joe Doherty, Ranjit Singh Gill and Sukminder Sing Sandu are fighting government supported extradition that in all likelihood will result in political execution upon extradition.

What Our POW's & PP's Suffer Has Ominous Implications For Us All

What these freedom fighters continue to endure is only the very tip of the iceberg of what is in store for ever increasing sectors of population in the era of the "Total Police State." America at this very moment incarcerates a higher percentage of its population than any nation on earth!!! America incarcerates 426 people per 100,000 residents, 28 percent higher than South Africa at 333 per 100,000and 59 percent higher than the Soviet Union at 268 per100,000.

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America's Gulag

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America at 3,109 black males per 100,000 residents incarcerated locks up four times as many black males per 100,000 than South Africa does at 729 black males per 100,000. This is somewhat alarming considering that South Africa's majority black population makes up a much higher percentage of the total population compared to America's minority black population yet America locks up four times as many black males per 100,000 than South Africa does.

The period of 1972 through 1990, roughly the same time readily iden-

George Jackson

tifiable POW's and PP's were receiving death or life sentences in one out of two cases; there was wholesale incarceration of poor people of all races going on. The number of prisoners in federal, state and municipal prisons and jails tripled from 350,000 in 1972 to 1,055,829 by the end of 1990. The incarceration rate was 139 per 100,000 in 1980 under President Carter. It had accelerated to 244 per 100,000 by the end of the Reagan presidency; at an annual growth rate of 6 percent per year between 1985 and 1989.

The incarceration rate reached a staggering annual growth rate of 14.6 percent per year during the first six months of the Bush presidency's "Kinder Gentler New World Order Politics" to shatter the record for half year increases and posting the greatest increase in the annual incarceration rate recorded in the 64 year history since the government began tracking incarceration rates according to the Bureau of Criminal Justice Statistics.

U.S. prison populations will soon exceed the populations of states such as: Alaska, Delaware, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. America's alarming imprisonment figures underscore the argument that the incarceration rate is an accurate measure of the unsolvability of the economic and social contradictions under the current political set up and the government's unwillingness and inability to respond to those contradictions with other than increased imprisonment and escalating brutality in the course thereof.

U.S. Incarceration Rate Linked To Poverty & Unemployment

Although government officials, such as Norman Carlson, Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, admit that poverty and unemployment are more closely related to the incarceration rate than any other factors, the state's reaction is to expand "Prison Slavery" with accelerating "Rodney King style brutality."

Seventy-one percent of all prisoners and 73.8 percent of all women prisoners in the U.S. or under its jurisdiction had incomes below the [already too low] poverty level or were unemployed when arrested. Seventy percent of all female prisoners are mothers and over 50 percent are single heads of households. The most frequent crime in America, 63 percent, is a non-violent economic crime, typically involving an attempt by one or more poor people, who are more often than not heads of households and very often single heads of households, seeking to somehow make ends meet.

This is a far cry from the Hollywood media perpetuated myth of out of control, random drive by shootings. This focus is designed to serve the special interests of major media advertisers who sell large quantities of lucrative goods and services to rapidly expanding Departments of Correction, prisons and jails.

Movies like "Colors," "Boys in the Hood," "New Jack City," "King of New York," and the rest are not only designed to make huge profits while laying the justifying groundwork for expansion of "Prison Slavery," but also to incite reactionary lynch law hysteria and raise law enforcement "Fifth Columns" of vigilantes, informants, infiltrators, agent provocateurs, as "Total Police State apparatus."

The conditions that our POW's and PP's sacrificed themselves to attempt to rectify are now upon the people. Hence, if the struggle for our liberation is to both maintain its legitimacy and proceed forward we must organize (not now but right now and) struggle for the immediate and unconditional release of all of our POW's and PP's held in America's gulags.

Looting Local Treasuries

Continued from page 1

that hit working families and even the unemployed hardest.

Over half of Oakland's current projected deficit of $43 million is due to Gov. Wilson's proposed budget grab. Oakland City Manager Henry Gardner has called this the worst crisis the city has faced since the Great Depression.

Inspired by Bobby Seale's run for Mayor in 1973, forcing incumbent John Redding into a run-off, Judge Lionel Wilson, (in whose court Seale had previously appeared as a defendant) was elected Mayor of Oakland in 1977 with BPP support. As money and investment moved out to suburbs that were still mostly white, city government became majority black. Low income and minority residents saw little to no benefit. This pattern has been repeated in many cities, including Gary, Indiana, Detroit, Michigan, and Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Behind the loss of revenue to both the state and local governments stands a federal government that is distancing itself increasingly from financial and legal responsibility for the well-being of the people and passing that burden on to the states.

United States policy over the past 10 years has been to pass its constitutionally mandated responsibility to its citizens, that of providing life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, over to the states, while maintaining the federal right to tax, impose rules and regulations, programs, and policies on the states.

Where The Federal Money Is Going

While looting state treasuries in the name of federal fiscal crisis, federal priorities include paying off the national debt, bailing out failed banks and savings and loans, continuing to maintain combat-ready troops in Somalia, North and South Iraq, Panama, and soon to come, Bosnia-Herzogovina. General Carl Stinter, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Special Operations Command, says, U.S. Special Operations Command is conducting secret high-tech missions in 48 different countries, as well as 17 U.S. states, while President Clinton is announcing an increase in the Central Intelligence Agency budget.

State governments, fearing to challenge federal spending priorities, fearing to charge the federal government with neglect of its duties toward its own population, colluding to help the federal government pursue foreign ventures and projects at state and local government's expense, instead they mimic this practice in some type of governmental pecking order by doing the exact same thing to the counties and cities, who in turn are forced to loot their own communities. The poorer states are hit first, who hit their weaker cities, who allow attack on their weaker communities (the communities of black and other low income workers) with tax hikes, bus fare hikes, utility tax hikes, parking fee hikes, etc., as city services are cut, hospital services, fire protection, law enforcement, job programs, disabled citizen's programs, elderly programs, etc.

Where Does It All Stop? With You!

Since our state and local leaders are clearly unable or unwilling to take a stand against federal neglect of its citizenry, WE MUST!

Our communities are where the buck stops and our communities must be where the fight begins.

Twenty years after the Black Panther Party's 10 Point Program called for "Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice, Peace, and People's Community Control of Modern Technology" (See BPP 10-Point Program, "What We Want, What We Believe" #10) and fought and died attempting to put it in, our communities are being led further than ever from those goals.

We have to take a stand. Say "Enough!" with the tax hikes, parking fees and fares. Demand the state

Continued on page 17

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deliver our tax monies back into our communities to build up the economy.

Not tomorrow but NOW! Not after public schools are closed, not after city hospitals and libraries are shut down or become so under-funded their services come down to nothing. We can't wait until low income families are priced out of being able to take the bus, have a phone, pay their rent, utilities, or go to a hospital. We have to carry the message to the cities and state governments to tell the feds.

We must act NOW, or we will share the blame for the rising crime rate, homelessness, for our youth being destroyed through drug use, hopelessness, due to hunger and desperation our communities will suffer. Our communities are facing famine! Famine must be fought here, too!

Taxpayers' money is funding wars in foreign nations against other populations of working people. We *do* suspect motivation — wars like these generally haven't been based on principles of humanitarianism. The truth is that the population doesn't *know* the truth.

The answer begins in the communities, in building representation and strength through organization. That is how it always has been and the *only* way it works.

West Side Kickers

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Tribute

Continued from page 12

clumsy, work-hardened, calloused hands scrawling and scratching signatures on the contract, agreeing to highway-robbery interest rates in the fine print that never was read." Malcolm did not work there very long; he then worked at a variety of jobs, including Ford Motor.

It was also in Detroit, in 1952, that Malcolm attended the Nation Of Islam's Detroit Temple Number One, with his brother Wilfred; and it was not very long before he had worked his way into the Ministry; first as assistant, and then as the first full minister at Boston Temple Eleven. The city where he had begun his life of hustling, brought back memories of his sister Ella who later on sponsored his trip to Mecca. After building the membership at Temple Eleven, he was assigned to Philadelphia Temple Number Twelve, and shortly after building the membership there, was assigned to Temple Seven in New York. This city was where he had begun his "success" as a hustler. Reuniting with some of his old crime partners, he soon realized that these brothers were so brainwashed that it was virtually impossible for them to change from their lumpen lifestyle. But he also realized something else, "I knew better than all whites knew, and better than nearly all the black 'leaders' knew, that actually the most dangerous black man in America was the ghetto hustler. Why do I say this? The hustler, out there in the ghetto jungles, has less respect for the white power structure than any other Negro in North America. The ghetto hustler is internally restrained by nothing. He has no religion, no concept of morality, no civic responsibility, no fear — nothing."

For eleven years Malcolm worked tirelessly building the Nation Of Islam, during which time he met Sister Betty X, who later became his wife; they parented four daughters.

By 1963 Malcolm had become a national figure and a fiery spokesman for the Nation of Islam, who was once described by journalists as "the angriest black man in America." More and more members of the black community were listening to him; and a monumental event occurred.

President John F. Kennedy's Assassination

By 1963 Malcolm X was encroaching on the influence of "accepted" negro civil rights leaders. On November 22, 1963 President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. When asked what the assassination meant to him, Malcolm gave news reporters his famous retort that it was "The chickens coming home to roost," which caused grave concern within the Nation Of Islam. Malcolm was suspended for ninety days; for Elijah Muhammad had sent out the word for all his ministers not to comment about the murder of the president. "Many times since then, I've looked at the speech notes I used that day, which had been prepared at least a week before the assassination. The title of my speech was 'God's Judgment of White America.' It was on the theme, familiar to me, of 'as you sow, so shall you reap,' or how the hypocritical American white man was reaping what he had sowed.

"The question-and-answer period opened, I suppose inevitably, with someone asking me, 'What do you think about President Kennedy's assassination? What is your opinion?' Without a second thought, I said what I honestly felt...I said that the hate in white men had not stopped with the killing of defenseless black people, but that hate, allowed to spread unchecked, finally had struck down this country's Chief of State....The headlines and the news broadcasts promptly had it: Black Muslims; Malcolm X: Chickens Come Home To Roost."

It was during this suspension that he began to rethink some of his previously held beliefs about the doctrine of the Nation Of Islam.

While submitting to the discipline Malcolm became suspicious of the Nation, "I learned next that my 'silencing' was even more thorough than I had thought. I was not only forbidden to talk with the press, I was not even to teach in my own Mosque Seven...Three days later, the first word came to me that a Mosque Seven official who had been one of my most immediate assistants was telling certain Mosque Seven brothers: 'if you knew what the Minister did, you'd go out and kill him yourself.'"

This realization contributed to Malcolm leaving the Nation Of Islam and announced the forming of his own organization, Muslim Mosque, in New York's Harlem, and then deciding to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. In making a pilgrimage to Mecca, Malcolm came to understand Islam within a broader context, and to recognize that people of all complexions, from all parts of the world, worship through Islam. This realization led Malcolm to change his religious belief from what he understood from the teaching of Elijah Muhammad to the sunni orthodox Islamic faith and change his name to El Hajj Malik El Shabazz.

Upon his return to the U.S. Malcolm began to grapple with the question of how to proceed politically. All during this time he was aware that he was under surveillance by the government and suspected that members of the Nation were out to murder him as well. He had arrived at the position that religion alone would not free black Americans from racial and class oppression but that it would take organization that could address political and economic questions to change these conditions. He formed the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) in New York City only a few months before he was cut down by assassins February 21, 1965 at the Audubon Ballroom while giving a speech.

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Black Panther Party 10-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES.

We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions which exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE.

We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES.

We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS.

We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people on our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY.

We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self, If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE.

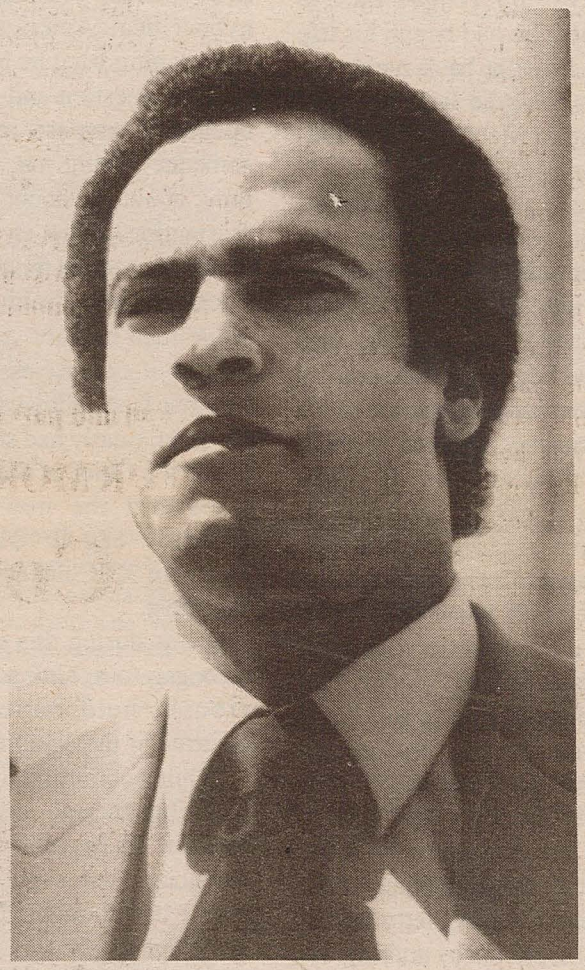
We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities which will not only treat our Illnesses, most of which have come about as a result of our oppression, but which will also develop preventative medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES.

We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color,a nd poor people inside the United States. We believe its our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGRESSION.

We believe that the various conflicts which exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires if the U.S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U.S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY.

We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U.S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U.S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions which are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons are brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism., it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

Mound Bayou

Continued from page 8

had property, kinship and legal ties to Vicksburg and Warren County. No, they were not trying to cast off their connection with slavery. In fact, they were rather proud of having achieved so much after beginning as slaves, for the most part. Many of our residents still revel in the fact of their slave ancestry."

City Judge and Vice Mayor Harold O. Ward, 37, for example, points with pride to his ancestors and to their dedication to Mound Bayou.

"While growing up here, though we had nothing, I was proud to be from Mound Bayou," Ward said. "Since 1970, we have built the city up so that it looks decent. You won't find any slums in Mound Bayou."

As a member of what one researcher called the "new middle class," Ward is at the core of the current leadership majority in the city's government. It is this group, said the writer, led by Mayor Earl S. Lucas, 49, who are responsible for the "professionalization of the community."

In seeking to give an objective view of life in his city, Ward said there were a number of warts on the town's face, dating from the past and lingering in the present.

"Life here has not always been sweet and beautiful, as some of the older people would have us believe," he said, and then smiled before continuing. "I've heard that there were any number of bodies buried in the surrounding woods, bodies of people who were supposed to have moved up to St. Louis or Chicago.

"Although we were never directly involved with whites, we have had our own problems. Throughout the history of the town, we've had our share of confusion. There certainly has been a lot of disagreement over how things should be run, as in any other city."

From the point of view of one Vicksburger with historical ties to Mound Bayou, the link between the two cities is equally vague. Rosemary Booze's earliest memories of Mound Bayou were over shadowed by the murder there of her great-uncle Eugene P. Booze, the son-in-law of Isaiah Montgomery and for years the unofficial mayor of the city, often in conflict with the elected mayor.

Born in Vicksburg, Miss Booze has worked for 22 years as a claims representative at the local office of the Social Security Administration. Her father Robert Booze was the nephew of Eugene Booze, who had married Mary C. Montgomery in 1911. Her only remembrance of Mound Bayou dated back to her childhood, she said.

Miss Booze recalled that her parents had taken her to Mound Bayou as a child. She believed that they had intended to move there, but wasn't quite sure. They were in town for only a week before moving back to Vicksburg.

"Mound Bayou has not been a big part of my life," Miss Booze said from her home in Vicksburg. "I lived there for about a week when I was still a baby I was aware of the name Booze and its importance in Mound Bayou. And I heard about the factions. But I have never made a conscious study of the place.

"Ever since my uncle was murdered in 1939, it continued to be such a shock to the members of my family that we thought very little of Mound Bayou. And what little we thought, that wasn't very good.

I understand that my uncle Eugene and aunt Mary were progressive. They were the Booze-Montgomery faction. And I think the other faction, the Banks-Green faction, as I remember, were the backward ones. Eugene Booze was shot down outside his office one night. They never found out who killed him."

If the adults retained only vague memories of their historical ties to Vicksburg, then it should be expected the school children of Mound Bayou would know practically nothing at all of their pre-settlement history. A random sampling of students at the city's John F. Kennedy High School bore this out.

While all the high schoolers knew of "Mr. Montgomery," the co-founder of their city, only one out of five knew of his origins and that one only vaguely ("from Warren county or Vicksburg, I think.") And like their parents and elders, the students exuded a sense of pride and an upbeat attitude about their town.

These same youths sought to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of growing up in an all-black environment. Their willingness to probe this question, along with a number of other serious themes, was itself both surprising and impressive.

The two major problems that irked the students were the increase in teenage pregnancy at the school and the lack of after school and summer time leisure activities. But what of their isolation from the "other" world, the world outside the limits of Mound Bayou?

"I feel that since I grew up in an all-black town maybe I was missing out on something," said Lucretia James, sixteen, a high school junior. "I mean that some nearby schools are not integrated. Now, when I go someplace else, I may have to get used to a different race of people."

Speaking of the whites that she has infrequently had contact with, she could perceive no difference, she said. "They seemed like regular people."

Continued on page 20

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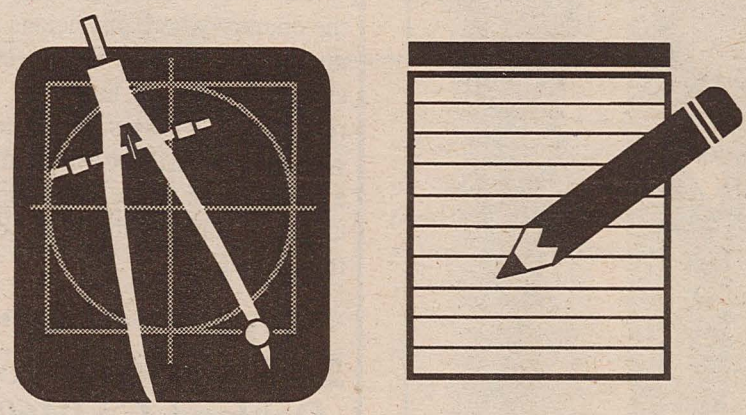

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Mound Bayou

Continued from page 19

Though born in New York City, Wilbert Battle had spent 12 of this 17 years in Mound Bayou. His mother grew up in the city and returned home after a failed marriage in New York. Battle easily recalled the story of founding fathers Isaiah Montgomery and Benjamin T. Green, but he never had learned of the connection to Vicksburg, he said.

Battle and his 11th-grade classmate and neighbor, John Bishop, also 17, recently held a loose collaboration on a prize-winning essay. Although Bishop got credit as sole author, they both had mused over the ideas for the piece on Mound Bayou's advantages.

"Mound Bayou has several advantages," the two-page essay read. "Its citizens do not have to worry about racial discrimination or to constantly look over their shoulders for racists or members of the KKK. All in all, Mound Bayou takes on this different look by escaping racial issues."

Founding father Montgomery also worried about the every-growing racial monster at the end of the 19th century, but the few writings of his, still extant, indicate the cool and reserve of a rational man fully in control of his own destiny.

In the one lengthy work by him, *Our Great State: Mississippi* written perhaps in 1923, he stressed the equality of black and white Mississippians. The state belongs to both, he emphasized.

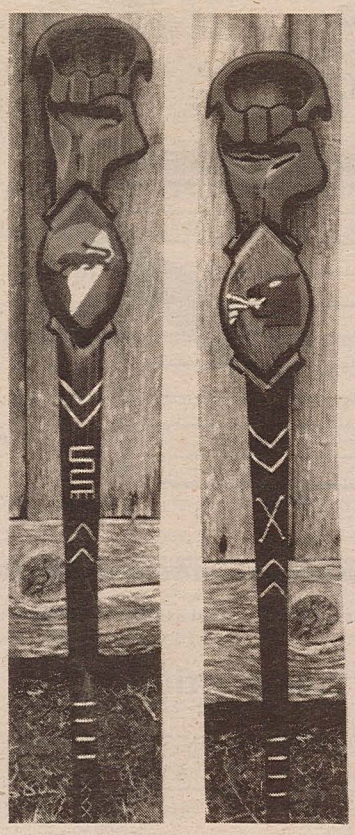
"I want to say to my people," Montgomery wrote in the year before his death, "you have a priceless heritage in this land redeemed to sunshine and promise. Go to the unnumbered grave yards, count the graves of the dead. Tell me how many are black and how many are white.

"These generations have lived, labored and died. Their whitened bones give indisputable testimony that their posterity may have this golden heritage.

"Our titles may not be written extensively in the books of mortal record, but they are written indelibly by unspeakable suffering and toil.

"I call upon you to stand still and steady yourselves and get ready for the next command, which is to go forward."

Russell's Version



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